



**Testimony
Bart Russell, Executive Director
Connecticut Council of Small Towns
Before the
Government Administration and Elections Committee
March 11, 2011**

RE: HB-5727, AN ACT CONCERNING ELECTION AUDIT PROCEDURES

The Connecticut Council of Small Towns (COST) urges support for **HB-5727, An Act Concerning Election Audit Procedures**.

Recognizing how vital the election process is to our democratic system of government, Connecticut's small towns have an excellent track record of compliance with the state's election laws. We also comply with post-election audits in order to ensure the integrity of the election process. However, the current audit selection process sometimes imposes a significant burden on certain towns by subjecting them to frequent post-election audits even though there have been no discrepancies found in previous audits. Some towns have been audited several years in a row.

Frequent post-election audits impose a considerable burden on small towns. The audits are generally held in mid-November when people are making holiday plans and it is often difficult to find available poll workers to conduct a recount of ballots by hand. It also imposes cost burdens on these towns because the process diverts time away from other town functions, which must be made up, and requires poll workers to be paid.

HB-5727 would provide greater balance in the post-election audit process by providing small towns with a four-year exemption following a post-election audit. This ensures that one town won't be overly burdened with audits. **This is also consistent with Connecticut's state ethics law, which provides that "By law, no registrant shall be subject to audit more than one time during any three consecutive years. Gen. Stat. § 1-96a(a)."**

We therefore urge your support for HB-5727 which will help reduce costs associated with post-election audits.

Connecticut Council of Small Towns
1245 Farmington Avenue, 101 West Hartford, CT 06107
860-676-0770 860-676-2662 Fax